

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 8, 2022

President Joe Biden  
The White House  
Washington, DC

Dear President Biden,

We are deeply concerned by comments made on June 30 at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit in Madrid, Spain, on the potential sale of Block 70 F-16s and mechanical upgrades to Turkey. We have strongly urged the rejection of this sale because it would reward President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan for ignoring Turkey's alliance commitments to the United States and NATO and the vast human rights abuses his regime continues to commit at home and abroad.

Erdoğan has consistently chosen to prioritize divisive tactics for personal gain above the collective good of his allies. His choice to block Finland and Sweden from joining NATO until he received absurd and unrelated concessions makes it clear that he has done the bare minimum to bolster NATO's strategic posture since Russia's invasion of Ukraine triggered the largest crisis the alliance has faced in decades.

Erdoğan's use of alarming tactics antithetical to the common good of the NATO alliance should not come as a surprise. His regime has repeatedly used its military power to destabilize the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East, South Caucasus, and North Africa for years. Turkish and Turkish-backed forces have utilized American-made weaponry and components during these incursions to commit war crimes, including purposefully bombing civilian targets like hospitals and schools in Iraq, Syria, and Nagorno Karabakh. They have also been used repeatedly to violate the sovereign territory of NATO allies and partners like Greece and Cyprus. These are hardly the actions of a committed ally to the United States and Europe.

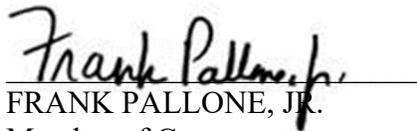
The sale of American advanced fighter jets to Turkey will not incentivize Erdoğan to suddenly transform into a good ally. More likely, these weapons will lead to further death and destruction in the region. Turkey also continues to utilize S-400 missile defense systems, which potentially exposes important tactical information about U.S. weaponry and military operations to Russia.

Additionally, the Erdoğan regime continues to promote unfair elections, suppress civil society, and abuse human rights at home to maintain its grip on power. With the Turkish economy in decline and Erdoğan's standing at an all-time low, news outlets directly controlled by his repressive ruling party will use any major weapons sale as propaganda to prop him up like they have already done with the concessions obtained at the NATO summit.

As your Administration seeks to advance the sale of new F-16s and modernization kits to Turkey, please know that we will take every action afforded to us as Members of Congress to prevent it from moving forward. Precedent shows that Erdoğan will not change his behavior if we continue to reward his efforts to undermine the NATO alliance. The United States must not provide any further support to Turkey's military until tangible steps are taken to halt his destabilizing actions and violations of international law at home and abroad.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns, and we look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

  
FRANK PALLONE, JR.  
Member of Congress

  
GUS M. BILIRAKIS  
Member of Congress

  
CAROLYN B. MALONEY  
Member of Congress

  
CHRIS PAPPAS  
Member of Congress

  
DINA TITUS  
Member of Congress

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JOHN SARBANES  
Member of Congress

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
JAMES P. MCGOVERN  
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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ALBIO SIRES  
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Member of Congress

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JACKIE SPEIER  
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JAN SCHAKOWSKY  
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Member of Congress

CC:  
Secretary of State Antony Blinken  
Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin